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SUBJECT Communist and Police Reaction to Arrest of
Alvaro CUNHAL

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1. Greater activity on the part of the Portuguese Communist Party (PCP), inspired by the arrest of Alvaro CUNHAL, was called for by a representative of the Central Committee at a recent meeting of the Party's local committee in Lisbon. While regretting the arrest of CUNHAL, the Central Committee's representative asserted that such police action would not interfere with the objectives of what he called the 50,000 enrolled members of the PCP.
2. Although police action against Communists diminished after the arrest of CUNHAL, on 39 March they seized in a raid on a house in the rua Particular a Avenida Afonso III documents reportedly disclosing the organization of the PCP in the southern half of Portugal. In this raid they arrested Jaime dos Santos SERRA, an employee of the Naval Arsenal at Alfeite; Laura dos Santos Correia SERRA, his wife; and Augusto da Pereira de SOUSA, the Party functionary who controlled the organization in the Street Railways Company of Lisbon.
3. At the time of the arrest of Alvaro CUNHAL the police also apprehended Militao Bessa RIBEIRO and a woman official of the Party. CUNHAL reportedly refuses to disclose details of his activities or any information concerning the Party. By 4 April, he had been transferred to the Lisbon Penitentiary, but RIBEIRO had remained at Oporto.
4. The political nature of the documents found at the time of CUNHAL'S arrest further justifies the contention of the Portuguese Police that CUNHAL has been a member of the Secretariat in the capacity of political secretary rather than Secretary General of the PCP as believed by the rank and file Party members. These documents included correspondence with Communist leaders in France and other countries and alleged instructions from the Cominform.

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